

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method of accessing one or more computer files via a graphical icon comprising the steps of:

capturing **automatically** one or more graphical representations of one or more portions of information content of one or more computer files while an application is manipulating the one or more computer files;

creating **automatically** an icon including selected portions of the captured one or more graphical representations of the information content of the one or more computer files wherein the icon graphically depicts at least a portion of the information content from the one or more computer files;

linking the icon to the application and to the one or more computer files;

storing the icon in memory;

displaying the icon;

invoking the application for manipulating the information content of the one or more computer files upon selection of the icon and opening the one or more computer files within the application.

2. **(Canceled).**

3. **(Canceled).**

4. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 3, wherein capturing a graphical representation is initiated by a user input command while the application manipulating the one or more computer files are active.

5. **(Original)** The method of claim 4, wherein the user input command is a keyboard command.

6. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing information related to the application for manipulating the one or more computer files in a memory along with the icon.

7. **(Original)** The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying the icon in a window on a screen display.

8. **(Original)** The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of displaying the window when a cursor is positioned at an edge of the screen display.

9. **(Original)** The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of concealing the window when the cursor is positioned outside the window.

10. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, wherein the step of invoking the application comprises invoking the application and opening the one or more computer files upon a single user input command selecting the icon.

11. **(Original)** The method of claim 10, wherein the single user input command comprises depressing a button when a cursor is placed over the icon.

12. **(Original)** The method of claim 11, wherein the button is a mouse button and the cursor is a mouse-driver cursor.

13. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, wherein if an application is active then the step of invoking the application comprises accessing the active application.

14. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing data related to the one or more computer files and the corresponding application each time the one or more computer files and application is opened and closed during a session, and wherein the step of invoking the application comprises

invoking the one or more computer files and the application based on the stored data related to the one or more computer files and corresponding application.

15. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 14, wherein the data related to the one or more computer files and the corresponding application includes a document path, a document handle, and application path, and an application handle.

16. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, wherein the step of invoking the further includes printing the computer file.

17. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, wherein the step of invoking the application comprises copying the one or more computer files to designated storage device.

18. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, wherein the step of creating an icon comprises creating an icon corresponding to a template file.

19. **(Currently Amended)** A method for providing a user interface for accessing a file based on a corresponding icon comprising:

storing a plurality of icons in a memory along with a corresponding plurality of references to an underlying file system for storage information for a plurality of files, each icon having an appearance substantially depicting information content from its corresponding file, wherein the plurality of icons were created by capturing automatically one or more graphical representations of one or more portions of information content of an icon's corresponding file while an application was manipulating an icon's corresponding file and include

selected portions of the captured one or more graphical representations of the information content;

linking an application to each icon based utility on the ability of the application to manipulate the information content of the file corresponding to the icon;

providing a window on a display screen for displaying the plurality of icons;

invoking the application for manipulating the information content of the file corresponding to the selected icon upon selection of an icon from the plurality of icons in the window;

accessing the file designated by the reference to the underlying file system corresponding to the selected icon; and

opening the accessed file into the corresponding application.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 19, wherein the step of storing a plurality of icons in a memory further comprises storing data related to an application for manipulating the corresponding file along with each of the plurality of icons and wherein the step of invoking the application corresponding to the selected icon comprises invoking an application based on the corresponding stored data related to the application.

21. **(Original)** The method of claim 20, further comprising providing a user interface for accepting a user input command to initiate storing an icon in a memory along with a corresponding reference to the underlying file system for storage information for the file.

22. **(Original)** The method of claim 21, wherein the user input command is a keyboard command.

23. **(Original)** The method of claim 19, wherein one of the plurality of icons substantially depicts a display of the corresponding file while the file is being manipulated by the application.

24. **(Original)** The method of claim 19, wherein the step of providing a window for displaying the plurality of icons comprises providing a plurality of windows.

25. **(Original)** The method of claim 19, wherein the step of invoking the application further includes printing the file.

26. **(Original)** The method of claim 19, wherein the step of invoking the application comprises copying the file to a designated storage device.

27. **(Currently Amended)** A method of using icons to switch between a plurality of files having information content and corresponding applications for manipulating the content of the files on a computer having a file system and an operating system user interface to the files within the file system, the icons being references to the files separate from the operating system user interface to the files within the file system, the method comprising:

creating and storing an icon for each of the plurality of files along with data relating an application for manipulating the information content of the file to the file associated with the icon and data referencing a storage location of the file within the file system, **wherein the icon was created by capturing automatically one or more graphical representations of one or more portions of information**

content of the file associated with the icon while an application was manipulating the file associated with icon and includes selected portions of the captured one or more graphical representations of the information content;

selecting an icon from the window;

invoking the file and the application for manipulating the information content of the file corresponding to the selected icon based on the data related to the application and the data referencing the storage location of the file; and

opening the file within the application.

28. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 27, wherein the icon substantially depicts information content from the file.

29. **(Original)** The method of claim 27, further comprising the steps of providing a window for displaying the icons and displaying the window based on a user-initiated display action.

30. **(Original)** The method of claim 29, wherein the step of displaying the window comprises displaying the window based on movement of a cursor to a predefined screen location.

31. **(Original)** The method of claim 30, wherein movement of a cursor to a predefined screen location comprises movement of a cursor to an edge of a screen.

32. **(Original)** The method of claim 30, further comprising concealing the window based on movement of the cursor to a second predefined screen location.

33. **(Original)** The method of claim 27, wherein the step of selecting an icon from the window comprises placing a cursor over the icon and depressing a button.

34. **(Original)** The method of claim 33, wherein placing a cursor over an icon and depressing a button comprises placing a mouse-driven cursor over an icon and depressing a mouse button.

35. **(Original)** The method of claim 27, wherein if an application is active then the step of invoking the file and the application for manipulating the file comprises accessing the active application.

36. **(Original)** The method of claim 27, wherein the step of invoking the file and the application for manipulating the file further includes printing the file.

37. **(Original)** The method of claim 27, wherein the step of invoking the file and the application for manipulating the file comprises copying the file to a designated storage device.

38. **(Original)** The method of claim 27, wherein the applications include at least two of a word processor, a database program, a spreadsheet program, and a drawing program.

39. **(Currently Amended)** A method for providing a template file for access outside an application comprising:

storing a file to be manipulated by an application as a template file along with an icon corresponding to the template file and data relating the application used to manipulate the information content of the template file to the file for the icon, **wherein the icon was created by capturing automatically one or more graphical representations of one or more portions of information content of the file while the application was manipulating the file and includes**

selected portions of the captured one or more graphical representations of the information content;

marking the template file as read-only;
displaying the icon outside the application;
invoking the template file and the application used to manipulate the information content of the template file when the icon is selected;
opening the template file within the application.

40. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 39, wherein the icon substantially depicts information content from the template file.

41. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 40, wherein the icon substantially depicts a display of the template file while the template file is being manipulated by the application.